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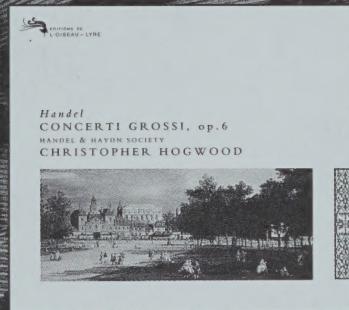


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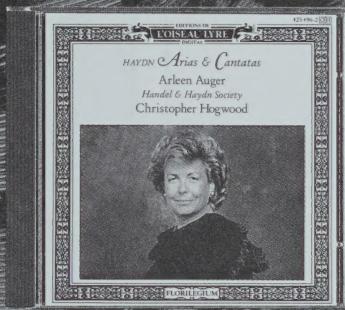
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The Handel & Haydn Society
Christopher Hogwood, Artistic Director

Friday, October 29, 1993 at 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, October 31, 1993 at 3:00 p.m.
Symphony Hall, Boston

Christopher Hogwood, Conductor

Ruy Blas Overture, Op. 95

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy

Violin Concerto in E minor, Op.64

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy

Allegro molto appassionato

Andante

Allegro molto vivace

Stephanie Chase, Violin

INTERMISSION

From Incidental Music to *Rosamunde*

Franz Schubert

Entr'acte I

Hirtenmelodien

Entr'acte III

Symphony No.4 in D minor, Op.120

Robert Schumann

(first version – 1841)

Andante con moto – Allegro di molto

Romanza. Andante

Scherzo. Presto

Finale. Allegro vivace

CHRISTOPHER HOGWOOD, CONDUCTOR



Christopher Hogwood is one of the world's most active conductors, and is internationally recognized as a pioneer in "historically informed performance." He is the founder of The Academy of Ancient Music, the first British orchestra formed to play Baroque and

Classical music on instruments appropriate to the period. He now shares with that orchestra a busy schedule of performances, touring, and recording. In America, in addition to being H&H Artistic Director, he is Principal Guest Conductor of The

Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, a modern-instrument chamber ensemble. Mr. Hogwood has conducted many of the world's great orchestras; he is also active as an operatic conductor, and is a regular guest conductor of the Australian Opera. He enjoys a fine reputation as a harpsichordist and clavichord player, and is also a highly successful recording artist for London Records/L'Oiseau-Lyre. Despite his busy performing and recording schedule, Mr. Hogwood has written a number of books, including his highly successful biography of Handel, published by Thames and Hudson. He holds an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Keele, is a Fellow of two colleges at Cambridge University, and holds International Professorships at the Royal Academy of Music and King's College, London.

STEPHANIE CHASE, VIOLIN



Stephanie Chase has been described as "one of the violin greats of our era," and has won worldwide acclaim for her artistry and technical mastery. With an extensive repertoire that ranges from Vivaldi to Bernstein, Ms. Chase has performed internation-

ally as guest soloist with numerous orchestras including those of New York, Chicago, San Francisco, London, Vienna, Mexico City, and Israel. In 1986, she was soloist with the Hong Kong Philharmonic on its historic tour of the People's

Republic of China. She is also a frequent guest of chamber music festivals worldwide. A versatile artist, Ms. Chase is active as a period-instrument performer. She has made a noted recording of Beethoven's Violin Concerto and Romances on Classical-era instruments with the Hanover Band on the Cala Records label; her other recordings are on Harmonia Mundi and Northeastern Records. Ms. Chase started her remarkable career playing violin at age two, and began concertizing extensively at age nine after winning Chicago Symphony Orchestra's Youth Competition. Her teachers have included Sally Thomas of the Juilliard School and the renowned Belgian artist Arthur Grumiaux; she currently continues her interpretive studies with William Lincer.

THE HANDEL & HAYDN SOCIETY

The Handel & Haydn Society is a premier chorus and period orchestra under the artistic direction of renowned conductor Christopher Hogwood. H&H is a leader in "Historically Informed Performance," performing works on the instruments and with the techniques and performing forces available to composers in their time, to reveal music as it was originally meant to be heard.

Founded in 1815, H&H is the oldest continuously performing arts organization in the United States. From its beginning, H&H has been at the musical forefront, performing several American premieres of Baroque and Classical works throughout the nineteenth century.

HANDEL & HAYDN SOCIETY

In recent years, H&H has achieved widespread acclaim through recordings on the London Records/L'Oiseau-Lyre label, national broadcasts, and sold-out performances at New York's Lincoln Center and other national venues.

H&H offers an innovative educational program for over 6,000 students in more than 40 schools throughout Massachusetts. H&H's Chamber Series, established to showcase small ensembles of the H&H chorus and orchestra, has received growing acclaim in recent seasons. Last year the Chamber Series found a permanent home at Jordan Hall at New England Conservatory, and this season expands to offer concerts at Sanders Theatre in Cambridge as well.

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REDISCOVERING THE ROMANTICS

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809–1847)
Overture to *Ruy Blas*, Op. 95
Composed March 1839

Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64
Composed September 1844

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
Incidental music to *Rosamunde*
Composed 1823

Robert Schumann (1810–1856)
Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120
Composed in 1841 as Schumann's second
symphony
Reorchestrated and revised by Schumann in
1851, as Symphony no. 4

form since Bach's time. But it is Mendelssohn's own compositions that place him in the circle of the best-loved musical figures of the era. Mendelssohn was a child prodigy and then a rapid composer throughout his career. A case in point is the overture to Victor Hugo's drama *Ruy Blas* that he composed in half a week, essentially on a dare. Asked to write an overture for a production of the play in Leipzig, Mendelssohn read Hugo's play, found it "really of no value, absolutely below contempt," and refused the commission. His literary taste was fastidious to the point of priggishness, and he might never have composed the overture except for a chance (calculated?) remark. The theater's music committee came to him on March 5, 1839, and apologized for allowing him so little time to write an overture, which would certainly take a great deal more time than he had. "They stirred me up," he wrote to his mother.

Despite the fact that he had rehearsals and performances with his own orchestra on March 6 and 7, he began laying out his overture that very evening and had it ready for the copyist on the 8th! Three days later, it "was given in connection with the wretched play, and has made me as much fun as anything I ever did in my life." The overture is filled with touches of pure Mendelssohn, working delightedly at a musical challenge, creating a lively interplay of strings and winds in the composer's characteristically deft scoring. Yet Mendelssohn never published it, and when he conducted it in London, he even concealed the title of the play to which the overture was attached!

Mendelssohn's artistic achievement is sometimes patronized because he was not considered "an innovator." Yet he did innovate in significant ways, and in works that were immediately and widely liked. A classic example is the Violin Concerto, which Mendelssohn planned as early as 1838 for his friend Ferdinand David, a violinist, though he finally finished it only in September 1844 — and even then (as we shall see), he fussed over details for months. Only very recently have we been able to study the manuscript of the concerto, which was lost in World War II and not long ago turned up in Poland. It reveals many differences from the familiar published version. The present performance follows this original score; Stephanie Chase has used a facsimile of the manuscript, and studies of it, to determine what she and the orchestra will be playing.

When historical music scholarship began in earnest in the middle of the nineteenth century, its principal focus was the works of Bach and its first great achievement was the edition of Bach's completed music, which set the model for all the great critical editions of musical works to follow. The attention of serious music scholars was always to the more distant past, from the Middle Ages to the middle- or late-eighteenth century. Romantic music was too recent, too generally popular, and certainly too *present* to seem material for historical study.

All this has changed in the last quarter century, as the Romantics have become fodder for all kinds of research, both traditional and novel. This H&H program centers on the fact that the musical field has begun to reconsider precisely what works might represent and what musical text the composer expected us to hear. As a continuation of recent enthusiastic investigation into musical performances in the Baroque and Classical eras, there is now growing attention to the kind of music-making that took place in the world of our grandparents and great-grandparents — a world that we have rather blithely assumed is no different from our own simply because we attend concerts in the very same hall that they did.

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

Felix Mendelssohn was himself one of the leading lights in the recovery of the music of Bach, as he was responsible for the first performance of *St. Matthew Passion* in anything like its complete

Aside from the sheer melodic grace and refinement of the concerto, and the brilliant "fairy-music" of its finale, the work has always been cited in the history books for Mendelssohn's original treatment of the cadenza. Standard procedure in the solo concerto is generally for the orchestra to conclude its recapitulation on a 6/4 chord and then come to a crashing halt, effectively two chords away from the end, to allow the soloist an extended opportunity for solo display. Mendelssohn invented a clever and entirely original way of shaping the cadenza to make it a climax of the movement, by shifting it closer to the middle and by ending it with an extended arpeggiated passage that runs through the beginning of the recapitulation. This was so novel an idea that it still captivates today. Performers have traditionally started the arpeggio in a free tempo, gradually working up to allegro as it becomes the accompaniment for the return to the main theme. But the newly available manuscript and a letter Mendelssohn wrote to David on December 17, 1844 reveal a different vision: "The arpeggios have to begin immediately in tempo and continue four-four until the entrance of the tutti; is this too exhausting for the player?" This is how Stephanie Chase will play the arpeggio passage in the present performance; she will also follow the autograph in passages that Mendelssohn later lowered by an octave simply to make it easier for the player (this happens, for example, in the Presto of the opening movement). In the second movement, too, there are some changes in octave, and in the last movement adjustments in the lengths of phrases. Some of these new details will be very obvious to the listener familiar with the work in other performances; others will be very subtle. Most obvious, perhaps, is the sound of the violin Ms. Chase will use for the solo part; a transitional instrument between the Baroque and the modern violin, from about 1725-1750, this instrument's neck is halfway between the fairly flat neck of the Baroque instrument and the angled neck of today, with a smaller bridge and a different set of strings.

To us, Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto is one of the most popular and frequently heard classical compositions. This makes it hard for us to imagine

that there was a time when the piece was not fixed, when the composer wondered if he had gotten it right, when he was willing to try various solutions to technical and expressive problems. Even as Mendelssohn knew how eager David was simply to have the concerto finished so that he could play it, he had to insist, "Do not laugh at me too much. I feel ashamed in any case, but I cannot help it; I am just groping around." That is the kind of musical "groping" that occasionally produces a masterpiece.



Portrait of Felix Mendelssohn (1845)
by Eduard Magnus

FRANZ SCHUBERT

The incidental music of Franz Schubert was the best thing about *Rosamunde, Princess of Cyprus*, a ludicrous and improbable drama by Wilhelmine von Chézy that was performed just twice in December 1823. Schubert knew that this was an inferior work, but he accepted the commission to write music for it anyway. His contribution pleased the audience, and even Mme. von Chézy herself. The play itself was a strange mess of secret passages, poisoned letters, princesses raised by fishermen, shepherds who turn out to be princes, and so on. Its absurdities doomed the music completely. Still, bits of the music came to be known, and the bulk of it was recovered in one of the most spectacular finds of the nineteenth century by an English engineer and musical enthusiast named George Grove (who later assembled and wrote much of the first edition of *Grove's Dictionary of Music*). He went to Vienna in 1867 with the specific purpose of locating lost Schubert manuscripts rumored to be there, and by an extraordinary stroke of good fortune, managed to find the manuscripts of, among other things, five of Schubert's first six symphonies and the manuscript parts of *Rosamunde* — untouched since the performances nearly forty years earlier.

The original play was in four acts, so that the incidental music required a minimum of an overture and three entr'actes. In addition, the play called for an extended ballet in the second act, the alto romance and chorus of spirits in the third act, and four musical numbers — a "Shepherd's melody" (*Hirtenmelodien*) two choruses, and a ballet — in the final act. The instrumental selections have always been the best known parts of the score; this performance will also include the rarely heard "Shepherd's melody."

ROBERT SCHUMANN

It is well known that Robert Schumann often devoted himself to composing specific genres in a concentrated way. Most of his early music is for solo piano. In 1840, the year of his marriage to Clara Wieck, he suddenly poured forth about 150 songs. The following year, with the encouragement of his new bride, he embarked on the new field of orchestral composition. Early in 1841, he wrote his first symphony ("Spring"), which proved an instant success. Thus encouraged, he composed the first movement of what later grew into the Piano Concerto, a work that was in essence a symphony without slow movement, and a second symphony, in D minor.

The D minor symphony should be written as "No. 2" on this program — but, in fact, we all know it as "No. 4." This is because after Schumann premiered the piece in December 1841, with disastrous results, he withdrew the score entirely for a decade. When it reappeared, considerably revised in orchestration and somewhat changed in structural details, he had completed two other symphonies in the interim.

Schumann had hesitated to call the work a symphony at all in its first form. The close interlocking of thematic material from movement to movement, and the fact that the movements were intended to be played one after the other without pause (the audience was expected in those days to applaud after each movement), made him hesitant to link the work with the mighty nine of Beethoven, so he called it a "Symphonic fantasy." Ironically, when he brought it out again with the title "symphony," he took pains to carry further the links between movements that had caused him to hesitate over the title a decade earlier.

In addition to increasing the integration of movements, Schumann thoroughly reworked the orchestration, doubling virtually every single thematic line in at least two and often more instruments. We read that he did this because he was generally incompetent as a conductor and wanted to assure himself that *someone* in the orchestra would come in if he failed to give a clear

cue, although this explanation seems unlikely as the total explanation—if, indeed, it is true at all. What we lose in the later, more familiar version of the symphony is the freshness of the solo woodwind sonorities particularly. The first version's brighter, more varied feeling for color will perhaps be one of the major differences to strike the listener who knows the piece well. The other difference — perhaps somewhat more obvious — is that the 1841 version does not overtly draw attention to all of the thematic links between one movement and another; rather, they are left for each listener to discover.



Autograph scores of the opening of Schumann's Symphony in D minor: (l) 1841 version; (r) 1851 version

calculated blandness, a softening of precisely those striking immediate ideas that project the composer's personality. One musical connoisseur who found the first version of the Symphony in D minor preferable was Johannes Brahms, who had the 1841 score published in 1891 (against the desire of his close friend Clara Schumann, who herself could not believe that Robert's revision was not a complete improvement).

Regardless of version, Schumann's D minor symphony is one of the most ingenious and successful experiments in formal continuity produced in the nineteenth century. Three principal musical ideas recur throughout the entire work, creating a sense of unity rare in a mid-century symphony. At the same time, Schumann's fresh and imaginative reworkings of these ideas never pall, though we hear them many times in the course of the four movements. A century ago, Arthur Nikisch led the two different versions of Schumann's symphony on two successive weeks of Boston Symphony Orchestra concerts, but few people alive today can have heard the first version of this touchstone of the Romantic symphony.

—Steven Ledbetter

Steven Ledbetter is musicologist and program annotator for the Boston Symphony Orchestra.



Messiah

A Boston holiday tradition since 1854

This December, the Handel & Haydn Society gives its 140th annual production of Handel's *Messiah*. H&H has a long and significant relationship with this masterpiece: the Society performed selections from *Messiah* at its very first concert on Christmas night, 1815, and then gave the American premiere of the complete *Messiah* in 1818. H&H has performed the work every year since 1854, making these performances a longstanding and favorite Boston tradition.

H&H's performances of *Messiah* have undergone many changes over the years. Chorus size has ranged, for example, from a Victorian-era *Messiah* extravaganza in 1857 that featured over 700 singers, to more recent productions emphasizing historical accuracy with a Handelian chorus of 30 singers. Under Christopher Hogwood's artistic direction, H&H now performs *Messiah* on period instruments, and each year selects a different version of the work from the many that Handel made in his lifetime. This

season, H&H performs Handel's 1743 "London" *Messiah* — the version Handel presented to his English audiences for the first time, following its debut in Dublin in 1742.

H&H is delighted to welcome American composer John Harbison as special guest conductor, leading the H&H chorus and orchestra in six performances at Symphony Hall and one at Veterans Memorial Auditorium in Providence. Mr. Harbison has a special fondness for *Messiah*, and is especially fascinated by the connections between Handel and later generations of composers. "This extraordinary music has a tremendous print on later music," he notes. This year's *Messiah* promises to be an exciting musical dialogue between a leading contemporary composer and an earlier master. H&H also welcomes soloists Christine Whittlesey, soprano; Mary Westbrook-Geha, mezzo-soprano; Frank Kelley, tenor; and James Maddalena, baritone.

Join us for a very special tradition!

John Harbison conducts the H&H chorus and orchestra
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The Conductor's Circle of the Handel & Haydn Society brings together individuals who express their deep commitment to Baroque and Classical music by donating \$1,000 or more to the Annual Fund. The generosity of Conductor's Circle members has enabled Artistic Director Christopher Hogwood to establish H&H as a premier period instrument orchestra and as a national leader in historically informed performance.

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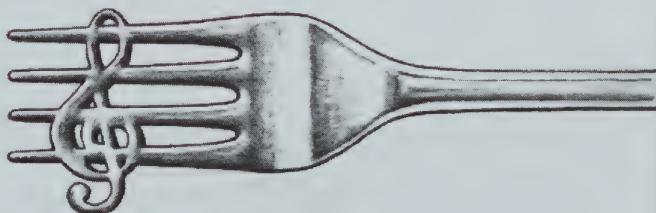
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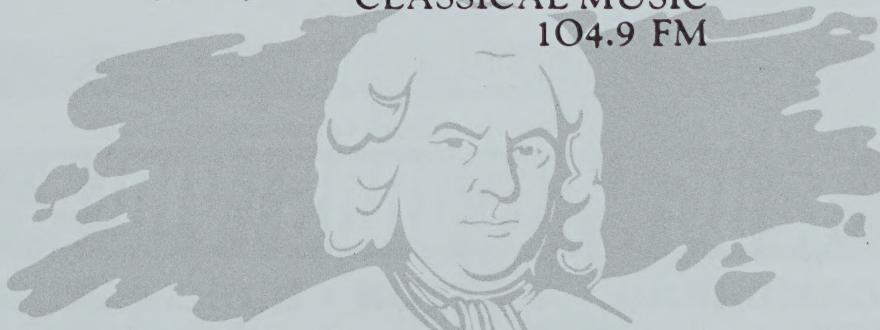
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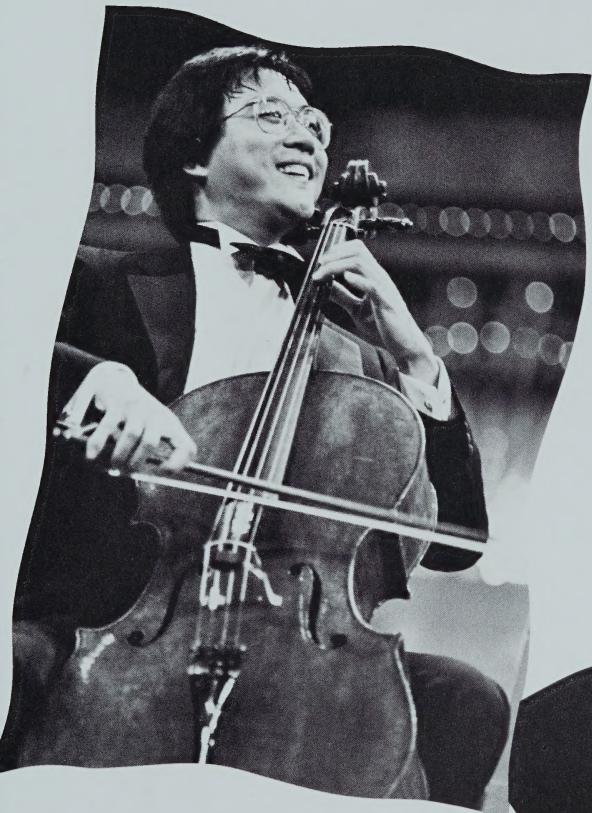
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